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QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

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EGYPT

[Original: Arabic]

[23 February 1994]

[The following communication was transmitted by the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations on behalf of the Arab States.]

1. The steady increase in the responsibilities currently being assumed by the United Nations highlights the importance of establishing the principle of equal rights and duties among States in respect of the exercise of authority by the various organs of the United Nations, so as to ensure the interests of all Member States, achieve justice and guarantee legitimacy.

2. Over the past few years, the nature of international relations has changed radically. Consequently, the composition of the Security Council must reflect such developments and the accompanying change in the nature of the challenges facing the United Nations.

3. The Arab States believe that it is vital for the United Nations to move with the growing trend aimed at using action in the regional context as an indispensable contribution to the shaping of future international political relations.

4. The Arab States also affirm the need to readjust the ratio between the number of Security Council members and the total number of Members of the United Nations, which has been disturbed as a result of the recent large increase in the membership of the Organization, and to achieve an equitable distribution of Security Council seats among the various geographical regions with a view to securing the effective participation of each group in the decision-making process in the Council, which would have positive effects on the strengthening of international peace and security.

5. In the light of the above, the Arab States urge the necessity of ensuring that their representation on the Security Council is proportionate to the number of Arab States among the total membership of the United Nations, bearing in mind that the Arab States share historical and cultural links.

LIECHTENSTEIN

[Original: English]

[24 February 1994]

1. Liechtenstein notes with satisfaction that in the recent past the Security Council has achieved increased effectiveness in carrying out its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security conferred upon it by Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations.

2. Since the adoption of the amendments to Articles 23 and 27 of the Charter in 1963, the number of States Members of the United Nations has increased substantially. A discussion on the question of equitable representation on the Security Council therefore seems to be timely. In the view of the Government of Liechtenstein, it is important for the credibility and the effectiveness of the United Nations that the international community considers itself equitably represented on the Security Council. A thorough discussion of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council should, therefore, be conducted before decisions on this question are taken. A lasting and fruitful solution can only be found on the basis of a genuine consensus.

3. The Government of Liechtenstein is of the opinion that the following criteria should be considered in the discussion that has been initiated:

(a) While it seems timely and appropriate to review the membership of the Security Council, its effectiveness should be maintained and increased so that this body retains its ability to deal with international crises. A limited enlargement of the Council therefore seems appropriate. It is equally important to ensure that any expansion of the Security Council also meets the concerns and interests of small States. If new members are chosen, their election should be undertaken on the basis of Article 23, paragraph 1, of the Charter.

(b) Given the increasingly informal nature of the work of the Security Council, there is a clear need for enhancing its transparency. This would include efforts by the Council to consult more actively with non-member States of the Council involved in questions under consideration by this body and the involvement of countries contributing to peace-keeping operations in the decision-making process of the Security Council. Moreover, contact with States that are not members of the Council should be intensified in the light of Article 25 of the Charter.

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Kazakhstan 2

KAZAKHSTAN

[Original: Russian]

[17 March 1994]

1. The Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan welcomes the adoption of General Assembly resolution 47/62 of 11 December 1992 on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. Kazakhstan also welcomes the discussion of comments and proposals on this question which has been initiated in response to a request from the Secretary-General.

2. The unique character of the present moment in world development is creating new opportunities for multilateral mechanisms for coordinating action by States, first and foremost for a forum such as the Security Council. The world's entry into a post-confrontational era, the end of the "cold war", the advent of partnership in place of rivalry and the affirmation of the primacy of law are creating unprecedented opportunities for the full realization of the peace-keeping potential of the Security Council.

3. In recent years, the world community has been witness to truly tangible action in the Security Council. The task at hand, however, is not only to build upon past achievements, but also to raise the Council to a qualitatively new level of international responsibility by fundamentally reorganizing its structures and improving its procedures.

4. Being guided by Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, under which Security Council decisions are taken on behalf of all States Members of the United Nations, Kazakhstan considers it necessary to re-examine Security Council membership with a view to achieving adequate representation of all the geographical groups from which the membership of the United Nations is drawn. Changes in membership on the Security Council could be made as follows:

(a) Germany and Japan, as major economic Powers whose contribution to the cause of world peace and security is widely recognized, should be made permanent members of the Security Council. Moreover, a representative of the group of developing countries should also be made a member. Thus, the number of permanent members of the Council would increase to eight.

(b) The non-permanent membership of the Council should be increased by three States – one each from the three regional groups of developing countries (Asia, Africa and Latin America).

5. The Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan welcomes the proposal of Italy on restructuring the Council on the basis of the principle of universality and the granting of equal opportunities to all States. In view of the need for equitable representation of States Members of the United Nations and for the maintenance of an appropriate balance between all members of the Security Council, Kazakhstan views positively the idea of including a group of "semi-permanent" members on the Council, since, in our view, creating such a

group would make it possible to enhance the flexibility and effectiveness of Security Council actions for the welfare of the world community.

6. In view of the fact that the Security Council is a principal organ of the United Nations, it might be useful to strengthen coordination of the Council's activity by the General Assembly by:

(a) Submitting the Security Council's annual reports for subsequent consideration at the General Assembly session;

(b) Holding daily consultations between the Council and the Secretary-General on particularly important issues relating to threats to the security of individual countries, international security and peace throughout the world;

(c) Imparting a more democratic and transparent character to the Council's activities;

(d) Holding wide-ranging consultations between permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council with a view to organizing regular interaction among all the members.

7. Kazakhstan believes that the rule of "great Power unanimity", often called the "veto", does not meet the needs of the changed geopolitical situation in the world. It is Kazakhstan's position that a need exists to work out a democratic decision-making mechanism directed towards guaranteeing that the Security Council functions effectively and takes comprehensively into account the interests of all Member States.

8. The Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan hopes that consideration of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council will proceed in an atmosphere of full mutual understanding and fruitful cooperation among all States Members of the United Nations.